THE *GNOMOLOGY* OF GEORGIDES AS A WITNESS TO THE TEXTS OF GREEK AUTHORS

BY

CARROLL EUGENE SIMCOX

B.A., University of North Dakota, 1933
B.D., Oberlin College, 1936
A.M., University of Illinois, 1944

AN ABSTRACT OF A THESIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN CLASSICAL PHILOLOGY
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The *Gnomology* of Georgides is a sacro-profane anthology of the 10th/11th century, containing excerpts in both verse and prose from a variety of ancient sources: biblical, patristic, classical and post-classical secular works. In general form and organization it is reminiscent of two better known and earlier works, the *Loci Communes* of Maximus Confessor and the *Sacra Parallela* of John of Damascus; but it is clear from an examination of the text that Georgides' *Gnomology* (G) is actually independent of these works as sources. It is also demonstrably independent of the anthology of Stobaeus, a fact which enhances its value as a text witness since so many fragments of various authors are cited by modern editors on the sole authority of Stobaeus. It stands to reason that any witness of the age of G which is independent of Stobaeus demands the consideration of the text critic.

The author, or compiler, of the *Gnomology* was a Greek monk and probably a resident of the Levant. His work is preserved to us in four codices, one of which (B) was edited and published by Fr. Boissonade in 1829. This text and edition are included in Migne's *Patrologia Graeca* (Vol. 117). B is a MS of the 11th century and on the whole a good text, but there are several large omissions. The second MS, P (Paris Supplement 1246), includes only the first 745 sentences of the *Gnomology,* but it is a full text up to this point and more accurate than B. The third MS, F (Laurentianus VII, 15), normally agrees with B and P. It has fewer omissions than B and is a very reliable text. The fourth, V (Venetus 23), is a learned text. It contains numerous additions. V attempts occasionally to correct the lemmata or to supply one where there is need.

The textual basis of this study is a collation of these four MSS.

The purpose of the study is to analyze all the material in G other than the patristic, to establish its textual affinities where possible and to consider the possible contribution of each passage to the text of the particular author cited. Several passages whose authorship is uncertain are given special consideration as *Variae Sententiae.* This procedure necessarily involves a survey of the text tradition of each work or author from which G has been excerpted. Moreover, in the case of each author it is necessary to face the question: Is G excerpting directly from an actual text of the author, or is his immediate source an anthology like his own? In the majority of cases it is impossible to answer the question with certainty; but in some cases the answer, either the one way or the other, is certain from the evidence.

The first section of the actual analysis of the material is devoted to the biblical passages in G. This is the largest and most fruitful part of the study. In the introductory essay of this section the textual history and problems of the Septuagint (LXX) are reviewed in detail. The text tradition of the LXX is extraordinarily complex. Each biblical book has its own separate tradition, and it is necessary to master the tradition of each before the textual relevance of any witness can be understood.

The biblical books most frequently cited by G are *Ecclesiasticus* and *Proverbs.*

In the case of the former, there have been, or at least there were from the beginning, two distinct traditions which are known as the primary and the secondary. There were originally two books of *Ecclesiasticus*: one written by Sirach and the other, a modification of the first, by his grandson, Jesus ben Sirach. Both were originally written in Hebrew, and both were translated into Greek. The primary tradition is that of the Greek translation of the original work, the secondary that of the Greek translation of the work of Jesus ben Sirach. The great uncial MSS of the Bible, *Vaticanus, Sinaiticus, Alexandrinus,* preserve the primary tradition. The

secondary tradition is represented by a group of cursives, the most important of which is 248 (13th/14th cent.) The first corrector of *Sinaiticus* (*Sinaiticus* c-a: 7th cent.) and the Greek text which underlay the Old Latin Version (OLV: 2nd cent.) are important witnesses to the secondary tradition. The analysis of the *Ecclesiasticus* passages in G reveals that G is unquestionably another witness to the secondary tradition. This conclusion is one of the important results of this study.

The original Hebrew texts of both the primary and the secondary traditions have been lost but many fragments have been recovered in modern times. At whatever points the Hebrew text is available, G's reading is considered with reference to that as well as to the LXX, the OLV, and the other important versions.

The passages of *Ecclesiasticus* in which G presents variants that require special consideration are the following: 29:25, 3:21-22, 25:16, 13:20, 10:14, 28:13, 23:16, 13:3, and 21:25. In the analysis of these passages it is shown that G stands with 248, *Sinaiticus* c-a, and OLV as an emphatic witness to the secondary tradition. It is shown also that three of G's readings, namely 13:20, 10:14 and 21:25, are clearly preferable to the established LXX readings: the first two on the strength of their agreement with the recovered Hebrew text, the third on the strength of syntax and integrity of sense.

Proverbs

The *Book of Proverbs* is essentially a "collection of collections", an undatable document which grew over a period of time roughly from 400 B.C. to its final edition not long before 200 B.C. But for long after that time the text suffered continuous interpolation and free editorial revision. There are not only several hands in evidence but several distinct points of view. The LXX is pronouncedly independent of the Hebrew. The normal presumption would be that in cases of

conflict the Hebrew text must be accorded more weight, but this by no means follows; for the Hebrew text as we have it today is actually roughly a thousand years later than the LXX. For that reason, although the Hebrew text is duly considered in the attempt to reconstruct the original reading where the text of *Proverbs* is corrupt, it does not speak the final word in every case. With *Proverbs* the task of the critic is to establish the best possible reading of a passage rather than to solve problems of text tradition. In this study, therefore, the excerpts from *Proverbs* are considered primarily in terms of their intrinsic sense (and consonance with the Hebrew), and secondarily with a view to their extrinsic text relations within the family of Greek MSS.

The proverbs discussed are the following: *Proverbs* 17:11, 16:29, 28:3a, 12:16, 12:23a, 9:13, 17:3, 16:19, 8:9, 17:1 and 18:18a and 16:17 c (composite). Reasons for regarding G's readings as superior are stated in connection with 17:11, 16:29, 18:18a and 17:1.

Other Biblical Books

One excerpt from *Ecclesiastes*, 7:2, shows G and Maximus Confessor uniting against all other texts and witnesses in a generally superior reading.

Other variant readings of biblical material in G which are analyzed are those of *Leviticus* 19:36 and *I Samuel* 15:22. There are only three New Testament citations in G. Two are strictly regular, and the third is a paraphrase and condensation of *Matthew* 6:20.

Aesop

The material labelled "Aesop" in G is drawn from a book originally known as the "Proverbs of Aesop" and which is preserved to us, but only in part, in a 14th-century MS. This MS (M) is now in two parts which have been edited by C. Krumbacher and V. Jernstedt. G, being four centuries older than M, is not only valuable early witness to the text of the

lost work: it also contains some elements missing from M. The passages which are related to this source number 26 in all in G, and they are analyzed with reference to the text of M: to confirm and correct M where possible and to supply some material which M lacks. G is our earliest surviving witness to the "Proverbs of Aesop."

Babrius

There are 20 Babrian passages in G: all of them prose epimythia to Babrian fables. Since our best and fullest MS of Babrius is Codex Athous (A) and this MS is of the 10th century, roughly contemporaneous with G, one of the chief concerns of this study is the textual relationship between G and A. It is found that for the most part G is a favorable and corroborative witness to the A tradition. But in some of his passages G appears to draw from some Babrian MS which was similar to A but not identical with it. G's Babrian source was a fuller MS than any that we now have: this MS possessed prose epimythia and passed under the name of Babrius. Perhaps the chief contribution G makes to our knowledge of the text tradition of Babrius is his testimony that certain fables attributed by later editors to Aesop were regarded as Babrian by G and his sources. In addition, G supplies five epimythia which we get from no other source.

Isocrates

It is evident that G had before him a text of the *Pros Demonikon* of Isocrates. He draws very copiously from this document, and his readings are of sufficient regularity as well as number to make it reasonably certain that he is excerpting from the text itself, *i.e.* from Isocrates directly. In his variants he tends to line up against the chief MS of this work, Codex Urbinas. In this study the Isocratean material is considered as a test of G's methods and fidelity as a copyist. It is demonstrated that G will take certain liberties with the text before him to serve his purpose of edification: *i.e.* he may convert an indicative statement into a precept, or alter an

expression with pagan implications to make it acceptably Christian; but he is withal a careful scribe, who is much less inclined to alter words themselves than to alter the form of a sentence.

Menander — Monostichoi Menandri

G preserves, in its regular form, one sentence which is traditionally assigned to Menander, though Jerome is the first ancient writer we know about to attribute it to Menander. It is the saying made famous by Paul's citation of it (*I Corinthians* 15:33) : "Evil communications corrupt good manners." He preserves also eight sentences which are to be found among the so-called *Monostichoi Menandri.* These are one-line gnomic verses, about 750 in all, that come to us from Byzantine anthologies. G ascribes only one of his eight citations to Menander, which indicates that they did not come to him as a Menandrean collection. In this way he testifies that it was after his age that these lines were gathered up into a single corpus under the name of Menander.

Aphthonius

G's eleven citations from the fables of Aphthonius are all epimythia. Very evidently he had a text of Aphthonius before him, and with most of his excerpts there are no variations. In one reading he joins with John Doxopatres (11th cent.) to provide a better reading than any other text or witness provides.

Other Greek Sources

There are sentences in G which are either reproductions or adaptions of sentences in Herodotus, Hippocrates, Demosthenes, Theognis, Hesiod, Achilles Tatius, Heliodorus, and Philo Judaeus. Each of this is discussed with special reference to the text of the original.

Among the *Variae Sententiae* are considered nineteen passages in G which can either be shown to have an ultimate

classical source or which are of such a character that they need to be further considered as possible fragments of classical works.

G And His Sources

In the concluding chapter of the study the question of the sources of G is considered. It is shown that G is completely independent of certain other extant anthologies which are referred to in the first paragraph of this abstract. Some observations of H. Schenkl upon the *Grundstock* of the secular material in G are considered in the light of the results of this present study, and in partial agreement with Schenkl the following *schema* of the sources of the Gnomology as a whole is proposed: (1) the LXX; (2) the Greek Fathers; (3) the *Pros Demonikon* of Isocrates; (4) The "Proverbs of Aesop"; (5) a text of Babrius; (6) a text of Aphthonius; and (7) either one very mixed gnomology, or several, from which G drew his isolated citations of "Menander", Philo, *et al.*

VITA

The Reverend Carroll Eugene Simcox was born in Lisbon, North Dakota on April 14, 1912, the son of William B. and Laura Christy Simcox. He received his elementary and high school education in the public schools of Lisbon and Park River, North Dakota, and was graduated from the University of North Dakota with the degree of Bachelor of Arts in 1933, receiving departmental honors in English Literature. He studied for three years in the Graduate School of Theology of Oberlin College, specializing in Churh History and Semitic studies. He received the degree of Bachelor of Divinity from Oberlin in 1936.

Since that time he has been engaged in the ministry of the Episcopal Church. He did his graduate work in Classics at the University of Illinois while serving as an Episcopal student chaplain from 1942 to 1945, receiving the Master of Arts degree from Illinois in 1944. While a student at Illinois he studied under the late Professor W. A. Oldfather and Professors B. E. Perry, A. E. Murphy and D. W. Gotshalk.

At the present time he is chaplain of St. Francis House, the Episcopal student church at the University of Wisconsin. He is also Book Editor of *The Living Church*, a weekly journal, and a frequent contributor to the Church press. Among his published works is an article, "The *Role* of Cyrus in Deutero-Isaiah", in the Journal of the American Oriental Society (*JAOS* 57, 1937, 158-171).